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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: AFGHAN GOVERNMENT: "WE HAVE ENOUGH NUCLEAR
NEIGHBORS"

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1. (SBU) On October 7, Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone and the Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs (CDDEA) Wayne, together with the French Ambassador and British Deputy Head of Mission, briefed FM Spanta, NSA Rassoul, and three MFA officials on the Iranian uranium enrichment facility near Qom, per reftel instructions. (The French had received instructions to make the demarche jointly, if possible, with the US and UK.) They also discussed the recently-concluded Geneva talks. The Deputy Ambassador shared U/S Burns' background briefing on the talks, and pressed Spanta likewise to make a public statement urging Iran to comply with its international obligations regarding the NPT and UNSCRS.

2. (SBU) Minister Spanta said that he shared U.S. concerns regarding the Qom facility, and told us that "we agree we have enough nuclear powers in our neighborhood." He called the scheduled IAEA visit to the facility "encouraging." Spanta directed his spokesman, Zahir Faqiri, to find "a good journalist" who would pose a question to the MFA regarding Iranian nuclear enrichment. Spanta would take the opportunity to respond "in a positive way." He would attempt to "encourage Iran to cooperate further with the IAEA."

EIKENBERRY